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Understanding the Location Decisions of the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority's Housing Choice Voucher Holders: Pilot Study

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Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority

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**UNDERSTANDING THE
LOCATION DECISIONS OF
THE CUYAHOGA
METROPOLITAN
HOUSING AUTHORITY'S
HOUSING CHOICE
VOUCHER HOLDERS:
PILOT STUDY
FEBRUARY 28, 2015**

**CENTER FOR
COMMUNITY
PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT**

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OVERVIEW

The goal of the Housing Choice Voucher Program is to assist low-income families in renting decent, safe, and affordable housing. Voucher holders are free to select a unit and location that best meets their needs within the guidelines of the program. The Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA), which administers the program in Cuyahoga County, was interested in learning more about how housing choice voucher holders decide where they want to live. CMHA was also interested in understanding the barriers that might be preventing voucher holders from moving to areas of greater opportunity and how it could partner with cities to design programs that move voucher holders up and out of poverty. CMHA contracted with the Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University to undertake a pilot study to investigate these questions.

BACKGROUND

In 2005, 60% of CMHA's 13,405 voucher holders lived in the city of Cleveland. That percentage gradually declined over the decade between 2005 and 2015, until by January 2015, 47% (6,556) of the 13,879 voucher holders lived in the city of Cleveland and 53% (7,323) lived in the suburbs. The suburbanization of voucher holders in Cuyahoga County over the 10 year period can be viewed as a positive trend in terms of the ability of voucher holders to expand their choices, exposing them to a wider array of opportunities, schools, and job opportunities. As of January 2015, 14% (1,056) of suburban voucher holders lived in the 40 places that CMHA identifies as opportunity communities; communities in which the poverty rate is less than 20%. The number of voucher holders living in opportunity areas almost doubled from 2005-2010, but then stayed stable from 2010-2015. In 2015, more than half of those (56%) lived in the seven opportunity suburbs that are also "inner suburbs"¹ (Appendix 1).

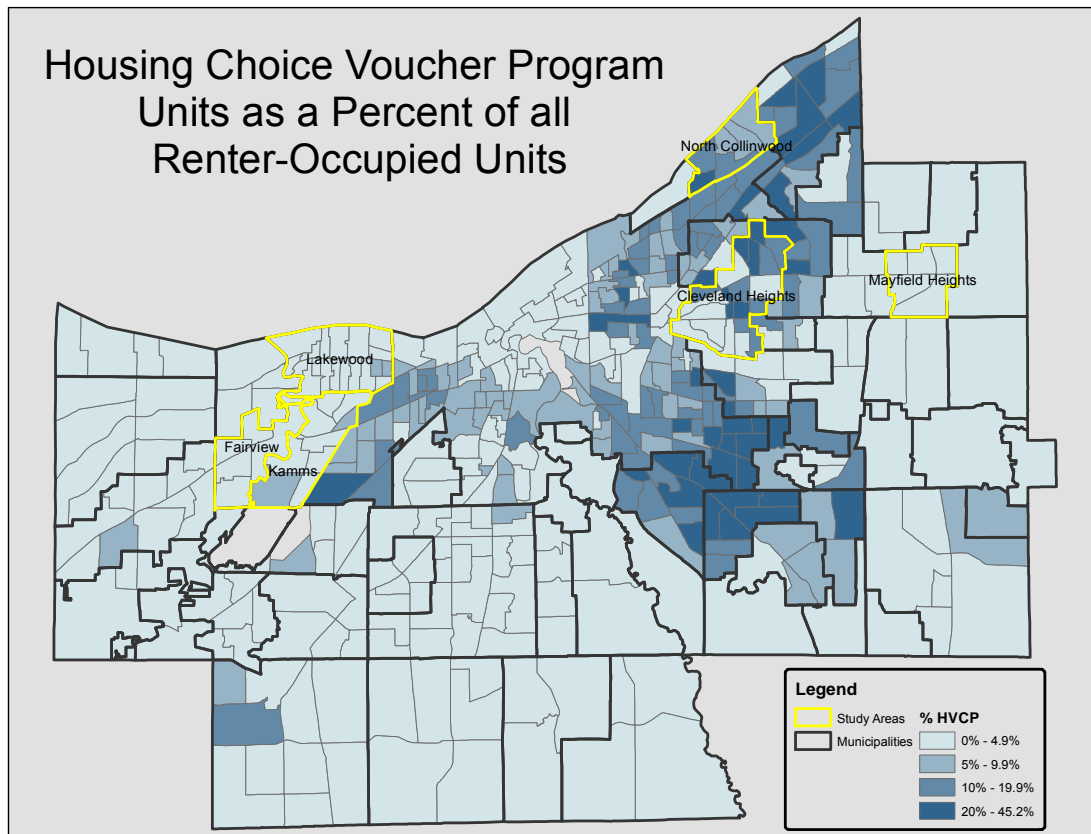
¹ Bedford*, Bedford Heights, Berea*, Brook Park*, Brooklyn*, Brooklyn Heights, Cleveland Heights, East Cleveland, Euclid, Fairview Park*, Garfield Heights, Lakewood, Maple Heights, Parma, Parma Heights*, Shaker Heights, S. Euclid, University Heights, Warrensville Heights*

This suburbanization of voucher holders reflects a national trend. In Cuyahoga County, the shift coincided with a period of rapid population loss in the city of Cleveland and a weakened county-wide housing market, brought about by the foreclosure crisis and the associated increase in the number of vacant homes. Furthermore, the great recession left many suburban and city residents unemployed or underemployed and in need of housing and other assistance. Both of these factors contributed to an increasing demand for affordable rental housing. At the same time, the weakened resale market for single family homes led to a growing sub-market of single-family rental housing which has increased choice in terms of the type of unit and neighborhoods available to voucher holders.

METHODOLOGY

Despite the fact that voucher holders live in almost every community in Cuyahoga County, they remain concentrated in the largest numbers in nine east side suburbs and in the neighborhoods of Cleveland's east side: Cleveland, Euclid, Cleveland Heights, Maple Heights, Garfield Heights, East Cleveland, Bedford Heights, Shaker Heights, Warrensville Heights, and South Euclid (Map 1).

Map 1. Concentration (% HCVP) of Study Areas



Based on the current and historical spatial distribution of voucher holders, we take as a starting point the typical search behavior resulting in concentration of voucher holders. Maps (see above) of voucher holders show this concentrated pattern, both at the municipal level (as some cities have proportionally more voucher holders than others) and at the neighborhood level (as there is substantial variation in voucher holder location even within cities where vouchers are common). We were most interested in learning how voucher holders living in areas that did not follow this pattern made their housing choices.

To frame our pilot study, we identified two sets of pilot areas in discussions with CMHA Housing Choice Voucher Program staff. Cluster 1 consisted of places where higher concentrations of HCV-holders reside and Cluster 2 consisted of places where lower concentrations of HCV-holders reside. Both sets include one east side and one west side suburban community and one Cleveland neighborhood:

Cluster 1 (concentrated): Cleveland Hts., Lakewood, E. 185th (North Collinwood)

Cluster 2 (not concentrated): Mayfield Hts., Fairview Park, Kamm's Corner

We employed both quantitative and qualitative methods in this pilot study. We reviewed data on all voucher holders provided by CMHA to describe and compare location, demographics, household composition, length of time in the program, and length of time in the unit for voucher holders in concentrated and non-concentrated areas.

Qualitative methods included a literature review, surveys, focus groups, interviews and observation of landlord and voucher holder information sessions. The literature review identified best practices in encouraging and supporting voucher holders who chose to move to areas of greater opportunity. Surveys were used to better understand the housing and community choices made by all voucher holders. Focus groups were used to understand the choices made by voucher holders who self-selected into the non-concentrated areas. Interviews with landlords and city officials provided further insight. Observation helped us understand the type of information landlords and voucher holders received from CMHA.

FINDINGS

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS AND MOBILITY: LITERATURE REVIEW SUMMARY

The CSU team reviewed the academic literature on housing mobility, location decisions and outcomes for housing choice voucher holders. Cuyahoga County is not alone in the shift among voucher holders from city to suburbs. A study by Covington, et al. (2011) for the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program analyzed the suburbanization of HCV recipients in the 100 largest metropolitan areas (including Greater Cleveland) in the years 2000 and 2008. It found that by 2008 almost half of HCV holders lived in suburban areas, with the rate of black HCV holders having suburbanized the fastest over this time period. It also found that “HCV recipients are more likely than the overall population and the poor to live in low-income suburbs with inferior access to jobs.”

A body of the research has looked at the outcomes of voucher holders who participated in special programs designed to move households to areas of greater opportunity such as Gatreaux (Chicago, court-ordered), Moving to Opportunity (pilots in selected locations²), and Baltimore Mobility Program (court-ordered). While this research is instructive in terms of understanding the search process and outcomes of program participants, it has been inconclusive about how voucher holders not involved in these programs make decisions about where they chose to live. Basolo (2013), Galvez (2010), Cunningham, et al. (2010) and others cite the need for more research on voucher holders’ decisions about residential location and the tradeoffs they make during their search.

² MTO is a 10-year research demonstration that combines tenant-based rental assistance with housing counseling to help very low-income families move from poverty-stricken urban areas to low-poverty neighborhoods. PHAs in Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York City participated.

Search Process: The research studies that do address this question consistently identified three crucial program elements that influence HCV holders' decisions to move to areas of opportunity and their outcomes. The three elements are:

1. Counseling HCV holders regarding their moves,
2. Extensive detailed information useful in the search for housing, including information about rights and processes, and
3. Post-move support.

Galvez (2010) studied the Moving to Opportunity programs and found that "The search experience receives the most attention in the literature. The research consistently finds that voucher recipients are discouraged and daunted by the housing search process and have difficulty finding housing.... In the end, many voucher recipients were confused or had false information about housing authority rules, and felt isolated and rushed during the search process" (p. 12).

She also found that, "The literature has not yet developed a clear picture of how preferences and search decisions link to move outcomes, the extent to which voucher holders may be satisfied with post-voucher neighborhoods, or the types of services that may facilitate moves" (p.13).

Cunningham et al. (2010) identified 6 crucial points at which housing authorities with mobility programs need to interact with voucher holders: pre-move counseling, housing search assistance, landlord outreach, moving assistance (financial), post-move counseling, subsequent move assistance.

A study aimed at enhancing services provided by social workers and housing administrators to HCV participants in Columbus, Ohio by Teater (2011) consisted of interviews with 14 HCV recipients (8 black, 10 females). She found that "Administrators of PHAs can ensure that there are clear procedures detailing clients' rights, a summary of rules and regulations that are written at a reading level for the general population, and an explanation of the grievance and appeals process".

DeLuca, et al. (2012) conducted one of the most extensive studies drawing on 10 years of fieldwork in several cities. She found that:

1. Poor families rarely choose when to move and where to live,
2. Time-pressured search processes rely upon quick and easy sources of information for sure-bet units,
3. When faced with resource constraints, families often make the tough tradeoff and sacrifice neighborhood quality for dwelling unit characteristics,
4. Families need a combination of housing subsidies and sustained housing counseling to learn about the benefits of different kinds of communities, to search for affordable quality housing in these areas, and to remain in these neighborhoods.

DeLuca (2014) also studied the Baltimore Mobility Program (BMP) that resulted from the settlement of the *Thompson v. HUD* public housing desegregation case. The intervention included extensive pre- and post-move counseling and higher FMR payments (up to 120 percent of area FMR) to allow access to more expensive suburban neighborhoods, as well as to provide assistance with security deposits. She found that 2,055 families moved from neighborhoods that were on average 80 percent black and 33 percent poor to those that were 21 percent black and 8 percent poor. She draws two relevant conclusions:

1. The BMP intervention has helped to reconfigure the residential choice frameworks of the families who received counseling and used their housing vouchers to move to low-poverty, mixed-race neighborhoods
2. Counseling was also crucial for the access to and tenure in high-opportunity neighborhoods

Improving Housing Authority Interaction: A number of researchers found that housing authorities could improve the search process by providing voucher holders and landlords with better information, counseling and specific ways to address common barriers. Rosen (2014)

conducted ethnographic fieldwork and interviews with 20 landlords (controlling 14% of HCV units) and 82 residents in Baltimore during 2011-2012. She found that some landlords would try to steer vulnerable voucher holders to their less desirable properties in lower opportunity neighborhoods. She concluded that, “Better information and housing counseling for families, transportation for housing searches, and security deposit assistance would all minimize the effect of the landlord’s targeted recruitment tactics that attract and retain vulnerable voucher holders. It is essential for families to be informed of their rights as tenants so they can report necessary repairs or request to move without fear of losing their voucher”.

A 2013, HUD-funded study in Connecticut conducted focus groups in three cities with 37 HCV holders (29 were black, all but one female). More than 80% lived in low or very low opportunity areas as previously identified by the state. The 5 topics covered in 2-hour sessions were: 1) Getting to Where You Live Now, 2) Satisfaction with Current Home, 3) The Moving Option, 4) Your Ideal Neighborhood, and 5) Breaking Down the Moving Barriers. The researchers identified 22 recommendations made by the participants. Some of these are unique to Connecticut, but others have more universal applicability. The recommendations fall into two groups: 1) more in-depth information, and 2) hands-on assistance from the Housing Authority. Participants recommended that they receive in-depth information about:

1. Schools in high opportunity towns,
2. Public transportation and any special programs designed to assist low-income families meet their transportation needs,
3. Population demographics, types of housing, rent levels, shopping, and employment in high opportunity towns, at a neighborhood level.

They recommended the following types of assistance with the search process:

1. Easy access to mobility counseling,
2. Availability of legal advice, especially for review of leases and for fair housing choices,

3. Sufficient funding for housing authorities (to provide this assistance),
4. Properly staffed, trained and tenant-focused housing authority staff,
5. Comprehensive and up-to-date lists of available, affordable, voucher-ready dwellings in all communities, accessible online as well at the housing authorities,
6. Real-time maps indicating where the units are currently available,
7. More information about tenant fair housing rights,
8. Additional time for apartment searches,
9. An easier process for moving with a voucher from one jurisdiction to another.

Neighborhood Satisfaction: Darrah and DeLuca (2014) looked at whether voucher holders who moved to areas of less poverty were better off or more satisfied in their neighborhoods. Their study found that when search assistance and extensive counseling are provided both pre- and post-move, voucher holders are better off over time. Counseling was crucial for the access to and tenure in high opportunity neighborhoods. The ability for the Housing Authority to pay higher FMRs was also important.

The findings from the literature review were used to inform the survey questions as well as the quantitative and qualitative analysis for this study. For the most part, our findings were consistent with these studies.

ANALYSIS OF CMHA VOUCHER DATA

We used data provided by CMHA on all voucher holders (13,930) from 2009-2014 to determine what differences, if any, existed among voucher holders who live in our two clusters:

Cluster 1 (concentrated): Cleveland Hts., Lakewood, E. 185th (North Collinwood)

Cluster 2 (not concentrated): Mayfield Hts., Fairview Park, Kamm's Corner

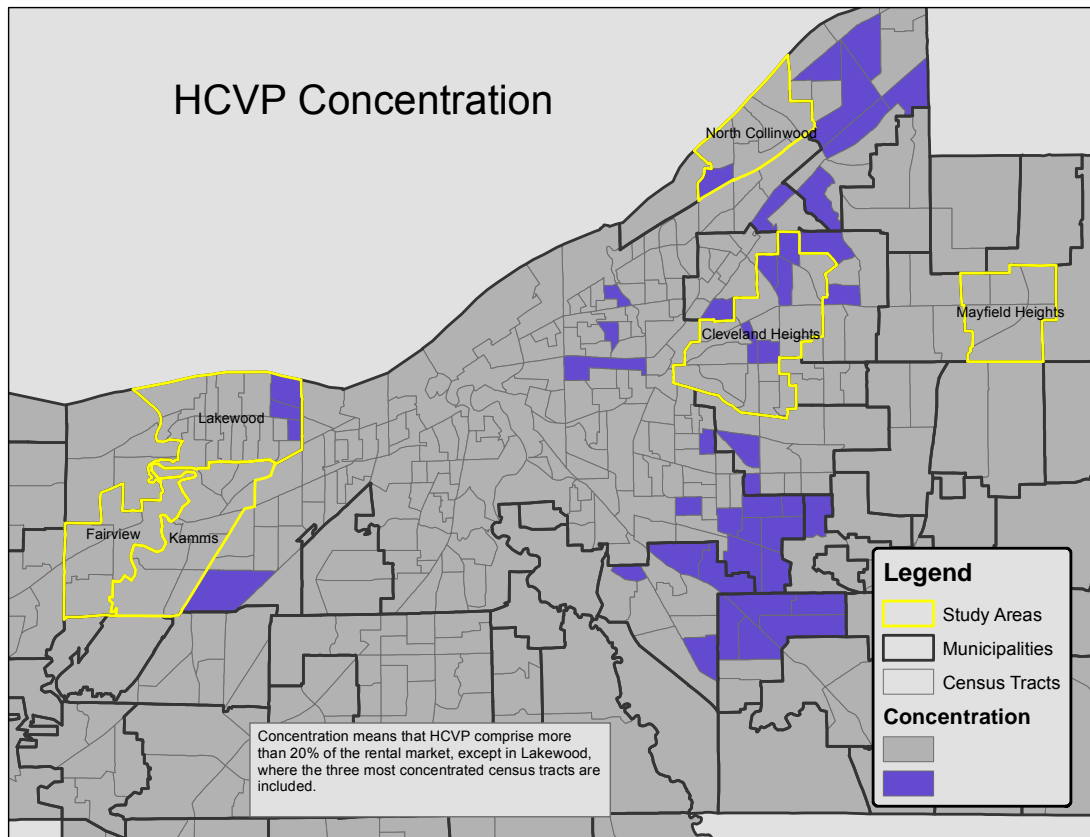
We found that 11% of all CMHA voucher holders lived in Cluster 1, while only 1% lived in Cluster 2 (Table 1).

Table 1. Number of HCVP households by Cluster and Concentration location

HCVP Household Location, 2009-2014		
	Total HCVP Households	
	Number	Percent
Cluster 1: Cleveland Hts., Lakewood, North Collinwood	1,589	11%
Cluster 2: Mayfield Hts., Fairview Park, Kamm's Corner	161	1%
Remainder of County	12,180	87%
Total	13,930	100%

We defined “concentration” as places where HCVP units comprised at least 20% of the rental market in a census tract. Once we examined the data, we found that only a small number of census tracts in each suburb/city neighborhood in Cluster 1 met our definition of concentration (Appendix 2). In Lakewood, no census tract met the definition of concentration described above, largely because such a high percentage (63%) of Lakewood’s housing stock is rental. We therefore defined Lakewood’s concentrated areas as three tracts with the most concentrated HCVP activity. In these three Lakewood tracts, voucher units make up 4% of rental units. The three tracts are located on Lakewood’s eastern border, abutting the City of Cleveland (Map 2).

Map 2. Existing HCVP Concentration of Study Areas



In Cluster 1 communities, 32% of all voucher holders lived in census tracts that meet our definition of concentrated. Countywide, 30% of all voucher holders live in concentrated areas (Table 2).

Table 2. Number of HCVP households by Cluster and Concentration Location

HCVP Household Concentration and Location, 2009-2014					
	Concentrated Census Tract?				Total HCVP Households
	No		Yes		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Cluster 1	1,080	68%	509	32%	1,589
Cluster 2	161	100%	0	0%	161
Remainder of County	8,549	70%	3,631	30%	12,180
Total	9,790	70%	4,140	30%	13,930

The data analysis found some distinct differences in the demographic characteristics of housing choice voucher households in non-concentrated areas vs. concentrated areas.

Compared with households living in the concentrated areas of Cluster 1, voucher households living in the non-concentrated areas of Cluster 2 on average are older, whiter, have no children and have lived in their units longer. They have also been in the program longer and pay lower rents.

Age: HCV holders are older in non-concentrated areas of Cluster 2. This is also true both countywide, where the median age differs by three years, and within Cluster 1, where the median age differs by six years (Table 3).

Table 3. Characteristics of HCVP households: Age of Voucher Holder by Cluster and Concentration

Age* of Householder: HCVP Households by Location and Concentration			
Cluster	Age	Concentrated Census Tract?	
		No	Yes
Cluster 1	Mean	48.7	44.7
	Median	49	43
Cluster 2	Mean	47.3	N/A
	Median	47	N/A
Remainder of County	Mean	46.1	44
	Median	45	42
Total	Mean	46.5	44.1
	Median	45	42
<i>*Age as of 1/1/14</i>			

Children in household: Countywide, 50% of all voucher holders have one or more children. If we look only at non-elderly households, 56% have one or more children. A lower percentage of HCVP households with one or more children live in Cluster 2. (38% compared with 46%). Among households that have children, the average number of children under 18 per household ranges from a low of 0.76 in Cluster 2 to 1.07 countywide (Table 4 and 5).

Table 4. Characteristics of HCVP households: Presence of Children by Cluster and Concentration

Children in the Household: HCVP Households by Location and Concentration, 2009-2014							
Cluster	Children in Household?	Concentrated Census Tract?				Total HCVP Households	Percent with Children
		No		Yes			
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Cluster 1	No Kids	611	72%	244	29%	855	
	Kids	469	64%	265	36%	734	46%
Cluster 2	No Kids	100	100%	0	0%	100	
	Kids	61	100%	0	0%	61	38%
Remainder of County	No Kids	4,374	73%	1,643	27%	6,017	
	Kids	4,175	68%	1,988	32%	6,163	51%
Total		9,790	70%	4,140	30%	13,930	

Table 5. Characteristics of HCVP households: Number of Children in the HCVP Household by Cluster and Concentration

Number of Children: HCVP Households by Location and Concentration, 2009-2014			
Cluster	Number of Children	Concentrated Census Tract?	
		No	Yes
Cluster 1	Mean	0.97	1.2
	Median	0	1
Cluster 2	Mean	0.76	
	Median	0	
Remainder of County	Mean	1.08	1.15
	Median	0	1
Total	Mean	1.07	1.16
	Median	0	1

Race: Countywide, only 10% of all voucher holders are white. However, within the non-concentrated areas of Cluster 2, 35% of the voucher holders are white. By contrast, in Cluster 1, 14% of HCVP households are white (Table 6).

Table 6. Characteristics of HCVP households: Race of Householder by Cluster and Concentration

Race: HCVP Households by Location and Concentration, 2009-2014							
Cluster	Race	Concentrated Census Tract?				Total HCVP Households	Percent White
		No		Yes			
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Cluster 1	Non-White	920	68%	439	32%	1,359	
	White	160	70%	70	30%	230	14%
Cluster 2	Non-White	104	100%			104	
	White	57	100%			57	35%
Remainder of County	Non-White	7,580	68%	3,551	32%	11,131	
	White	969	92%	80	8%	1,049	9%
Total	Non-White	8,604	68%	3,990	32%	12,594	
	White	1,186	89%	150	11%	1,336	10%
Total		9,790	70%	4,140	30%	13,930	

Length of time in unit: Of all HCVP households, 69% have never moved (Table 7). HCVP households in non-concentrated tracts have been in their specific units longer by over one year in Cluster 1 (41 months compared with the median of 28 in concentrated tracts), and by over 11 months in the county (38 months compared with the median of 27) (Table 8).

Table 7. Characteristics of HCVP Households: Entire HCVP History in the Same Unit

HCVP Households who have never moved, 2009-2014		
Moved?	Number	Percent
No	4,321	31%
Yes	9,609	69%
Total	13,930	100%

Table 8. Characteristics of HCVP households: Months in Unit by Cluster and Concentration

Months in Unit: HCVP Households by Location and Concentration, 2009-2014			
Cluster	Months in Unit	Concentrated Census Tract?	
		No	Yes
Cluster 1	Mean	51.3	41.3
	Median	41	28
Cluster 2	Mean	49.2	
	Median	29	
Remainder of County	Mean	50.3	38.3
	Median	37	26
Total	Mean	50.4	38.7
	Median	38	27
	Mean	46.9	
	Median	33	

Length of time in program: HCVP households in all non-concentrated areas have been in the program longer by approximately one year. Within Cluster 1, the difference between those in non-concentrated and concentrated is slightly higher at 1.1 years (Table 9).

Table 9. Characteristics of HCVP households: Months since Admission to HCVP by Cluster and Concentration

Months in Program: HCVP Households by Location and Concentration, 2009-2014			
Cluster	Months in HCVP	Concentrated Census Tract?	
		No	Yes
Cluster 1	Mean	107.9	100.7
	Median	107.0	93.0
Cluster 2	Mean	100.2	
	Median	91.0	
Remainder of County	Mean	106.9	101.8
	Median	97.0	86.0
Total	Mean	106.9	101.7
	Median	97.0	86.0
	Mean	105.3	
	Median	95.0	

Rent: Median rents are consistently lower in non-concentrated areas by nearly \$50 per month (Table 10).

Table 10. Median Rents

Rent: HCVP Households by Location and Concentration, 2009-2014			
Cluster	Rent	Concentrated Census Tract?	
		No	Yes
Cluster 1	Mean	\$686.70	\$724.91
	Median	\$652.00	\$700.00
Cluster 2	Mean	\$637.31	
	Median	\$605.00	
Remainder of County	Mean	\$653.43	\$699.82
	Median	\$631.00	\$680.00
Total	Mean	\$656.84	\$702.90
	Median	\$634.00	\$683.00
	Mean	\$670.53	
	Median	\$650.00	

SURVEYS, INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

Surveys, interviews and focus groups were used to collect information about:

- Overall search process and decision-making
- Sources and usefulness of information used in the search process
- Experiences while searching (denials, problems, limitations)
- Satisfaction with neighborhood choice
- Factors considered in the housing search (employment, schools, family, shopping, others)

Surveys: To gather information about the typical, i.e. “concentrated” search behavior we conducted surveys (Appendix 3) at CMHA’s information sessions for first time voucher holders. A slightly different survey instrument (Appendix 4) was developed for voucher holders who were moving from one location to another and was administered at the mover sessions held at CMHA. A comparison of results from new voucher holders and movers revealed that the first search of a typical voucher household differs meaningfully from the typical subsequent search.

A third set of surveys was administered via telephone with landlords participating in the program and those not participating in the program (Appendix 5). These surveys asked landlords why they chose to participate or not participate in the program, what barriers if any they encountered, and how they overcame those barriers.

Interviews and Focus Groups: We conducted 3 focus groups with voucher holders living in areas with low concentrations of voucher holders. We call these atypical compared to the dominant pattern—“the outliers”. Using focus groups instead of surveys allowed for a deeper understanding of the decision process that resulted in a spatially distinct outcome. We also conducted three interviews with city officials, one each in Fairview Park, Mayfield Heights and Cleveland Heights to better understand their experience and perceptions about the voucher program.

Survey Findings

All surveys were administered on site at CMHA during information sessions for new voucher holders and movers between May 2 and August 30, 2014. A CSU representative attended the sessions and distributed and collected the surveys. Participation in the survey was voluntary. We received 143 completed surveys from new voucher holders and 96 completed surveys from Movers.

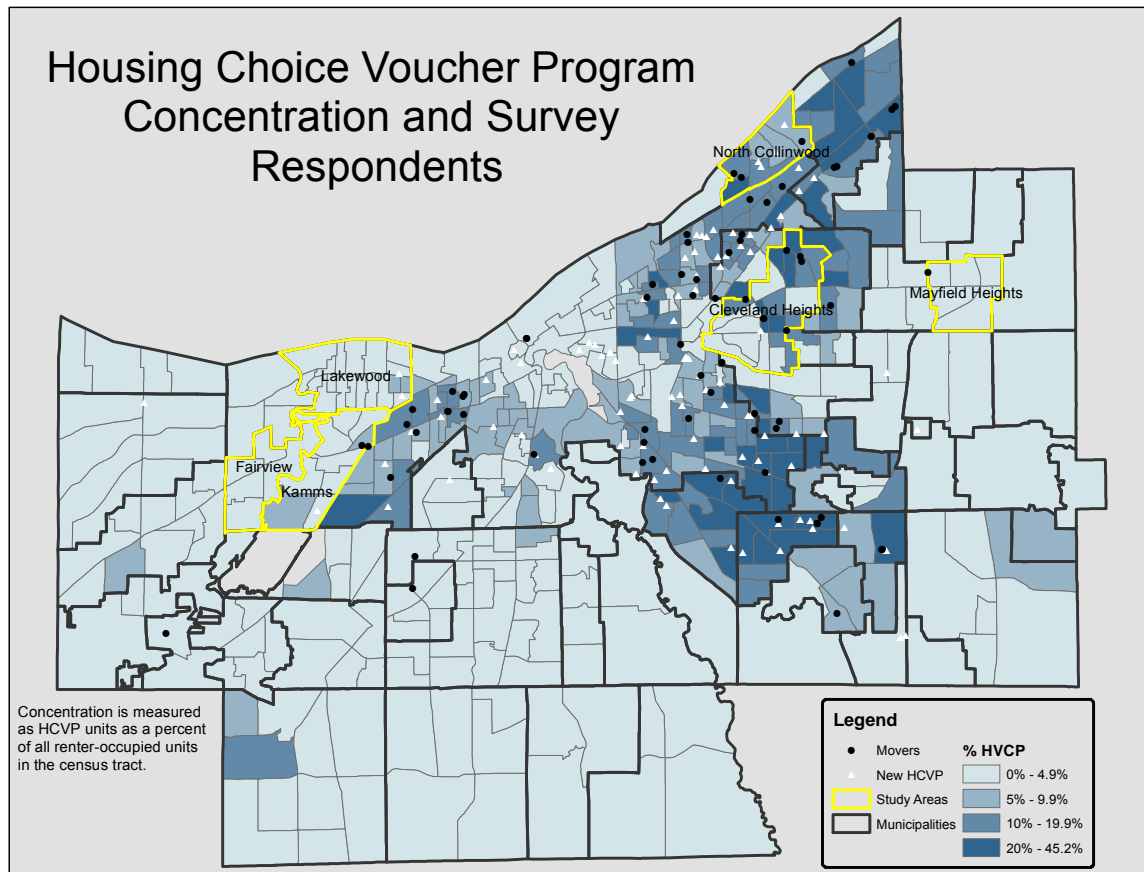
The surveys had three broad sections: demographic information, neighborhood characteristics and choice process and satisfaction with the information provided by CMHA. The survey results are summarized below.

Place of current residence

The majority (68%) of new voucher holders lived in Cleveland at the time they attended the information session. This is a higher percentage than all current voucher holders and those attending the mover sessions. The remainder were scattered across 14 suburbs with 6% in Maple Heights, and 5% in E. Cleveland.

A slight majority (54%) of survey respondents in the mover sessions lived in Cleveland. The remainder were scattered among 11 suburbs with 11% in Euclid, 7% in Cleveland Hts., and 6% in E. Cleveland (Map 3).

Map 3. Location of All Housing Choice Voucher Program Participants and Survey Respondents



(Note: A breakdown of survey respondents by city of residence is in Appendix 6.)

Demographics

Movers and new voucher holders have similar demographic characteristics with a few notable differences (Table 11).

- A smaller percentage of movers were employed (31% compared with 57%).
- Movers are older, with 45% age 45 or older. Among new voucher holders, 30% are age 45 or older.

Among movers, 24% said that this is their first move on the voucher program, 57% have moved one or more times before and 19% did not respond. Of the 55 people who had moved before using their voucher, 50 of them had moved two or more times. As for these movers, 45% (25) have moved two times, 20% (11) have moved three times, 13% (7) have moved 4 times and another 13% (7) have moved more than 5 times using their voucher.

A higher percentage of movers are age 55 and over with children (18%) compared with new voucher holders (11%).

Table 11. New Voucher and Mover Demographics

New Voucher and Mover Demographics				
	New Voucher (N=143)		Mover (N=96)	
Children	Total	Total %	Total	Total %
With Children in Household	63	44%	49	51%
No Children	63	44%	42	44%
No Response	17	12%	5	5%
Employment				
Employed	82	57%	30	31%
Unemployed	61	43%	66	69%
Sex				
Male	27	19%	19	20%
Female	92	64%	76	79%
No Response	24	17%	1	1%
Age				
18-24	23	16%	6	6%
25-34	41	29%	16	17%
35-44	19	13%	31	32%
45-54	22	15%	24	25%
55-64	11	8%	16	17%
65+	3	2%	3	3%
No Response	24	17%	0	0%
Access to a Car				
Yes	79	55%	49	51%
No	63	44%	45	47%
No Response	1	1%	2	2%
Happy With Current Neighborhood				
Yes	81	57%	45	47%
No	62	43%	51	53%

continued next page

Planning to Change Neighborhood				
Yes	108	76%	79	82%
No	33	23%	16	17%
No Response	2	1%	1	1%
First Move on Voucher				
Yes			23	24%
No			55	57%
No Response			18	19%
Number of Moves (N=55)				
1			5	9%
2			25	45%
3			11	20%
4			7	13%
5+			7	13%

Neighborhood Satisfaction

A slight majority of new voucher holders are happy with their current neighborhood (57%), but more than three-quarters are planning to change neighborhoods once they get their voucher (76%). Movers are less happy with their current neighborhood (47%) and a higher percentage are planning to change neighborhoods (82%) (Table 12).

Movers cited several reasons for moving; almost half said they were dissatisfied with their unit (48%), 25% had a problem with their landlord, and 24% cited dissatisfaction with their location (Table 13).

Table 12. Reasons for Moving

Movers and Reason For Moving* (N=96)			
	Total	%	Rank
Dissatisfied with Unit	46	48%	1
Other**	38	40%	2
Problem with Landlord	20	25%	3
Dissatisfied with Location	23	24%	4
Better Schools	16	17%	5
Raised Rent	4	4%	6

**Multiple responses possible per survey*

***See Table 13*

Table 13. Reasons for Moving in “Other” Category

Breakdown of Other Reasons for Moving			
Other by Category	Total	% of Other (N=38)	% of Total (N=96)
Issue with Unit or Landlord	14	37%	15%
Failed Inspection	5	13%	5%
Owner Selling Unit	2	5%	2%
Bedbugs/Rodent	2	5%	2%
Lease Ended	1	3%	1%
Landlord Leaving Program	2	5%	2%
Slum-lord	1	3%	1%
Landlord wants more money	1	3%	1%
Personal/Family	13	34%	14%
Desire Single Home	4	11%	4%
Household Number changed	3	8%	3%
Disability	1	3%	1%
Looking for a change	1	3%	1%
Homeless	4	11%	4%
Issue with Neighborhood	6	16%	6%
Bad Neighbors	3	8%	3%
Transportation Issues	1	3%	1%
Safety	1	3%	1%
Job Relocation	1	3%	1%
Cost	1	3%	1%
Asked to pay Utilities	1	3%	1%
Unspecified	4	11%	4%
Unspecified	4	11%	4%

Neighborhood Search Factors

In general, 90% of both new voucher holders and movers think they have good choices for housing.

The surveys presented a list of 18 factors (plus one open-ended option) and asked respondents to identify all the factors that were considered in selecting the current neighborhood and the factors that will be considered in selecting the future neighborhood. Respondents were also asked to identify their top three factors. The factors were drawn from the literature and discussions with CMHA.

Affordability and safety were most frequently cited among the top three factors for new voucher holders and movers for both their current and future neighborhoods. For both groups of respondents, affordability and safety were followed by being close to shopping, friendly neighbors, access to public transit and schools. Being close to work was cited less frequently by both groups, as was access to “many new job opportunities.” However, new voucher holders cited the importance of being close to work more frequently than movers. Somewhat surprisingly, being close to family and friends was cited more frequently than being close to work or new job opportunities, but in the midpoint of the list. Movers cited being close to family and friends as more important for the current neighborhood than for their future neighborhood (Table 14).

Table 14. Factors Considered When Choosing a Neighborhood

	Factors When Considering a Neighborhood															
	New (N=143)								Mover (N=96)							
	Current				Future				Current				Future			
	Total	%	Rank	# "Most Important"	Total	%	Rank	# "Most Important"	Total	%	Rank	# "Most Important"	Total	%	Rank	# "Most Important"
Affordable	103	72	1	17	97	68	2	21	59	61	2	10	56	58	2	7
Safety	100	70	2	19	103	72	1	22	61	64	1	15	68	70	1	16
Close to Shopping	88	62	3	4	70	49	4	3	58	60	3	9	52	54	3	5
Friendly Neighbors	78	55	4	2	61	43	5	1	41	43	5	2	49	51	4	2
Public Transit	76	53	5	4	53	37	6	4	51	53	4	10	44	46	6	7
Schools	69	48	6	7	73	51	3	15	41	43	5	10	45	47	5	11
Close to Friends/Family	51	36	7	4	35	24	10	0	36	38	8	2	25	26	9	1
Landlord	49	34	8	2	44	31	8	3	37	39	7	2	37	39	7	2
Close to Nature	49	34	8	2	49	34	7	1	18	19	12	1	25	26	9	2
Not Prejudiced	47	33	10	4	39	27	9	3	30	31	10	2	32	33	8	3
Close to Med. Services	44	31	11	2	33	23	13	2	31	32	9	0	21	22	13	0
Close to Work	34	24	12	0	34	24	12	3	13	14	14	2	17	18	14	4
New Job Opportunities	30	21	13	3	34	24	11	3	13	14	14	1	23	24	12	0
Close to Childcare	30	21	13	2	26	18	14	2	4	4	18	0	9	9	18	1
Economic Diversity	24	17	15	0	23	16	16	0	13	14	14	0	16	17	15	0
Close to Previous Residence	21	15	16	3	20	14	17	2	18	19	12	1	13	14	16	2
City Services	21	15	16	2	25	17	15	1	21	22	11	2	24	25	11	1

Being close to work was higher on the list for new voucher holders than it was for movers. However, among movers, both employed and not employed, there is a relatively high percentage that would like to move to a neighborhood that is closer to new job opportunities, compared with their current neighborhood.

Among those who are employed in both groups, being close to public transit and close to work was slightly more important than it was to the group as a whole. Being close to child-care was less important (Table 15 and 16).

Not surprisingly, respondents who had access to a car placed less importance on being close to public transit.

Table 15. Employed New Voucher, Factors Considered in Selecting Neighborhood

Employed New Voucher Survey Respondents (N=82)				
	Current Neighborhood		Future Neighborhood	
	Yes	%	Yes	%
New Job Opportunities	19	23%	22	27%
Public Transit	44	54%	33	40%
Close to Work	9	11%	8	10%
Close to Childcare	12	15%	9	11%

Table 16. Employed Mover Reasons for Selecting Neighborhood

Employed Movers Survey Respondents (N=30)				
	Current Neighborhood		Future Neighborhood	
	Yes	%	Yes	%
New Job Opportunities	5	17%	8	27%
Public Transit	12	40%	11	37%
Close to Work	8	27%	11	37%
Close to Childcare	1	3%	5	17%

Among movers with one or more children, 59% said the quality of schools was important but only 22% ranked it as one of the three most important factors in choosing a new neighborhood. For new voucher holders with one or more children, a similar percentage, 62%, said the quality of schools was important but only 17% ranked it as one of the top three factors (Table 17).

Table 17. New Voucher Holders and Movers on the Importance of Schools

New Voucher/Movers on Children and Schools					
Type	Children	Importance of Schools			Total
		No	Yes	Most Important	
New Voucher	No	52	10	1	63
	Yes	13	39	11	63
	Total	65	49	12	126
Mover	No	37	5	0	42
	Yes	9	29	11	49
	Total	46	34	11	91
Total	No	89	15	1	105
	Yes	22	68	22	112
	Total	111	83	23	217

Suggestions for improving the information sessions

Only 30 respondents from both groups completed this question. Ten suggested that an up-to-date listing of available units and landlords that accept vouchers be distributed. Five suggested that there be more options in the suburbs/county. Three suggested extending the search period. And finally, five suggested that CMHA conduct landlord outreach and screening.

Focus Group Results

Focus groups were conducted from December 16-18, 2014 to determine the process by which the residents came to live in non-concentrated areas and their experiences since moving there.

Sessions were held at public library branches in the three areas identified as not having concentrations of residents participating in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program (Cluster 2: Fairview Park, Mayfield Heights, and the Kamm's Corner Neighborhood of Cleveland). A total of 12 HCV holders participated in the groups:

- Kamm's Corner in Cleveland, December 16, 2014: 2 participants
- Fairview Park, December 17, 2014: 8 participants
- Mayfield Hts., December 18, 2014: 2 participants

With the exception of one senior citizen residing in Fairview Park, all of the participants were African-American. This individual was also unique among the group because she had lived in the same apartment building for thirty years. She became eligible for the HCV about 15 years ago and the landlord was willing to continue her tenancy by accepting the voucher.

Choice of neighborhood

The balance of the eleven heads of household had specific reasons for settling in the neighborhoods where they live. For those who have or had children, the major reasons were safety as well as better neighborhood and better schools. The majority of respondents did not have children in their household during the time of the focus groups, but two did when they initially received the vouchers. Another commonly expressed sentiment was the desire for quieter and more peaceful neighborhoods. Respondents expressed no problems living in areas predominantly populated by Caucasians/Whites. These findings are consistent with the survey results.

One respondent, who no longer has children in her household, chose her east side suburb specifically for the school district. The district provided services for her disabled child while she

lived in another east side suburb and she wanted to continue receiving them by moving to another east side suburb, Mayfield Heights.

Search process

Participants typically encountered difficulty finding housing that met their expectations. They repeatedly found that suburban property owners would not accept the voucher. The most common reasons voucher holders were given by these property owners was past experiences of landlords and stigmatization of HCV holders.

They also stated that finding a nice neighborhood is a problem whether in a suburb or not. GoSection8 and HousingCleveland.org were not useful sources of housing choice information; the choices were limited and not all places listed accepted the HCV. Other sources of information were more helpful including Craigslist, newspapers, rent books, relatives, a VA caseworker (who provided a list), word-of-mouth, and scouting for “for rent” signs.

Most of the respondents looked for units in other places before settling in their respective locations. One person, who moved to the Cleveland west side, had been approved for an apartment in the Shaker Square area that failed the HCV inspection twice. Those living in Cleveland had also considered Cleveland Heights, Shaker Heights, and Lakewood. Persons living in Fairview Park reported that other places considered were University Heights, Cleveland Heights, Westlake, Rocky River, Lakewood, and North Olmsted. Among some west siders, there was a preference for the west side either within the city or the suburbs. The east siders did not have a preference for that particular side of the Cleveland area.

Three residents disclosed that they concealed the fact that they had a voucher from their prospective landlords until after they had met them personally. In a couple of instances, they were aware that the landlord did not want to accept the voucher. This seems to be a wise strategy because it allows the voucher holder an opportunity to be judged as an individual rather than as a member of a sometimes stereotyped group of home seekers. While possibly an

effective tactic for voucher holders, it has the potential to aggravate landlords, and negatively influence their view of both the program and voucher holders.

Another participant disclosed her difficulty in finding a place with a rent rate that CMHA would accept even though it was lower than the amount for which she understood she was eligible. Even the 30-year resident was confused about how the rent calculations were made and why the part for which she is responsible has increased annually.

Type of dwelling

The residents in Kamm's Corners resided in two-family structures. The residents in Mayfield Heights lived in single-family homes. Six of the households in Fairview Park lived in apartment buildings (4 in the same complex). The remaining two lived in single-family properties.

Overall, residents enjoyed characteristics of their neighborhoods including the access to public transportation, recreation facilities, senior services, hospitals, churches, parks, and city services (including police response time). One Cleveland resident particularly appreciated having current and former police officers as neighbors. Nearby employment was another attraction for this same resident.

Inspections

The opinion about CMHA inspections was mixed. Some felt that the private inspection company was an improvement, others felt the opposite. Respondents cited inconsistencies between the findings of CMHA inspectors who made initial and follow-up inspections as well as disparities between the city and CMHA inspections. One person stated that the CMHA inspections were more thorough. In a few focus group locations, participants described the inspection findings as petty (e.g., light out in the hallway, caulking tape needed, type of smoke detector, repaint garage floor, light out on stove, small amount of rust on bathtub, and electrical wiring in the garage).

Communication with CMHA

Some residents stated that they were aware of changes underway at CMHA but did not understand what they were. They desire more information about how these changes might affect them.

Residents also expressed some dissatisfaction with CMHA customer service. Inconsistent information was a common complaint as was untimely return of phone calls and missed appointments. Among those persons residing in the outlying areas, the inconvenience of having to visit the CMHA office to conduct business (such as recertification) was a concern.

Suggestions made by the participants include:

- Provide better information about housing options outside the city including other counties
- Provide assistance with the housing search, particularly transportation
- Give clarity on voucher allowance
- Provide incentives to search and move to non-concentrated areas
- Market the HCV program to landlords with positive aspects
- Dispel stereotypes about HCV residents

Landlord Interviews

We interviewed a total of 30 landlords for this study. CMHA provided a list of landlords currently participating in the program. Using this list, we interviewed a total of 17 landlords: 8 landlords with units in Cluster 1 (Cleveland Heights, Lakewood, Collinwood) and 9 landlords with units in Cluster 2 (Mayfield Hts., Fairview Park, Kamm's Corners). In addition, we interviewed 13 landlords who publicly advertised units for rent in the local newspaper and specified "no section 8".

Observations from Landlords Accepting Vouchers

We found that 41% (7) of the 17 participating landlords intend to continue with the program while 59% (10) are not currently seeking new CMHA residents or intend not to continue with the program. This is especially true in Cluster 1. Of the landlords with properties in high HCV concentration neighborhoods (Lakewood, Cleveland Heights, Collinwood), 75% (6/8) intend not to continue with the program. In contrast, 68% (6/9) of landlords in Cluster 2 (Fairview Heights, Mayfield Heights, Kamm's Corners) would continue with the program.

The majority of landlords with HCV tenants had portfolios of single or two-family homes, though 5 landlords interviewed had large portfolios (100-5,000 units) including multi-family buildings. Of the 5 landlords with large portfolios, 60% (3) inherited HCV participants primarily through apartment building acquisition. All but 1 of these 5 landlords cited a lack of time or will to manage HCV tenants or complete the HCV process and have stopped seeking out subsidized housing participants.

The landlords who were most positive about the HCV Program either had smaller portfolios with fewer properties to manage (therefore allowing more time for tenants), or had intentionally invested in working with HCV participants to resolve any issues. Generally, landlords had a positive perception of the overall program, but often mentioned that the day-to-day operations, customer service, and communication needed improvement.

Half of the participating landlords in Cluster 1 reported negative experiences or impressions of their tenants. Common grievances included damage to property, lagging on rent, or housing unauthorized tenants. The other half had positive or neutral impressions ("fine as long as they keep paying rent.")

Landlords use various means to find HCV tenants. Five of the 17 (29%) reported that their HCV tenants came to them through referrals, 3 used newspaper ads or online listings, 3 cited building

acquisition, one used a mix of Craigslist and other listings, one posted a “for rent” sign, one used CMHA listings, and one used an existing personal contact. Two did not respond to this question. Landlords with large portfolios especially spoke to the power of referrals from close friends or family members while landlords with smaller portfolios used varying means to attract tenants.

Interaction with CMHA

Inspections: Of the 17 landlords currently participating in the HCV Program, 71% (12) cited an unsatisfactory experience with CMHA-contracted inspections involving customer service, quality of work, and/or overall process. For 18% (3) of the 17 landlords, these experiences were cited as the key factor in their decision not to continue to accept voucher tenants. These issues included what they viewed as either petty or exorbitant requests from CMHA inspectors as well as a lack of consistency with previous CMHA inspections or with city inspections. The length of time involved with the inspection/re-inspection process, along with slow paperwork processing in general, created delays and loss of rent—even if HCV tenants were move-in ready.

Customer Service and Communication: Seven (41%) of the 17 of landlords who had recently participated in the program desired clearer communication channels with CMHA, especially landlords with small portfolios. When these landlords called the CMHA headquarters, they found the automated system and voicemail to be ineffective and preferred speaking with a live representative. Other stated desires were for rent adjustments (based on inflation, insurance, etc.), tighter policing of unauthorized occupants, and improvements in eviction or legal processes.

Landlord suggestions for addressing issues or barriers

Based on landlord feedback, the following improvements in customer service, operations, and user-friendly communication methods would increase satisfaction.

- Improve electronic communication and landlord portal by borrowing from the example of the real estate industry. Expedite paperwork processing with a user-friendly upload process, reduce redundancy by arranging existing leases through an online system, save

time for landlords via efficient email communication (rather than drive to the CMHA headquarters for every lease). Provide landlords with the option of submitting paperwork electronically.

- Improve phone communication: hire live receptionist (preferred over automated system), check voicemail regularly, call back promptly (24-48 hours), and routinely clear full voicemail inboxes.
- Evaluate inspectors on quality of inspections and customer service. Hire inspectors who are currently landlords or have experience with property management.
- Streamline inspection process in order to address move-in delays. Text or call an hour before inspectors come so landlords know to be present.

Observations from Landlords Not Accepting Vouchers

In addition to interviewing participating landlords, we contacted 13 landlords who had advertised units for rent in local newspapers specifying that they do not accept vouchers. These landlords were asked why they would not participate in the program, whether they had participated in the past, and whether they might participate in the future. Landlords were contacted who were advertising units in the study Cluster areas: Cleveland Heights (2), Fairview Park (3), Lakewood (2), Mayfield Heights (2), North Collinwood (2), and West Park/Kamm's Corner (1). Of the 13 landlords, 5 said they had accepted voucher holders in the past but would not do so in the future.

A variety of reasons were given for not participating in the program. The most commonly cited reason (4 respondents) was issues with the inspection process (e.g. inconsistency, "hassle"). One landlord who had never participated in the program also cited the inspection process as the primary reason. Another respondent, an agent of a property management company with a portfolio of over 400 units in multiple counties, responded that his employer participated in the program in other counties but anticipated that there would be too many problems in Cuyahoga County.

Three respondents mentioned problems with previous voucher tenants as a reason for not participating, mostly regarding upkeep of the properties. However, 2 of the 3 had no previous

experience renting to CMHA voucher holders but they had participated in other subsidized housing programs. Lastly, 2 respondents attributed their non-participation to a lack of fit with the program, citing the small number of rental units in their portfolio or a “rent to own” situation. Three respondents said they would consider renting to voucher holders in the future.

Interviews with Community Officials

Three interviews were conducted with housing or building department officials, one each in Cleveland Hts., Mayfield Hts., and Fairview Park. The interviews were conducted in person or via telephone in January 2015 (See Appendix 7).

Perception of HCV program

All three officials described the process of getting quarterly lists of HCV tenants as very helpful. However, one stated that he appreciated getting the lists but hasn’t received any in over a year. They also appreciate that CMHA checks with them to make sure that the landlords are in compliance with any city rental licensing laws and inspections.

All three reported that most voucher tenants are fine. Their main problem with tenants is unauthorized tenants such as significant others or relatives. When there are problem tenants or problem landlords, the officials either deal with them directly or notify the CMHA ombudsman who is helpful in dealing with problems that are reported.

As a community with many HCV holders, Cleveland Hts. has fairly robust interactions with CMHA, regularly sharing city housing inspection reports and police reports with CMHA. They find that CMHA is responsive.

Problems

Problems with landlords involve absentee speculators who bought foreclosed single family homes and don't maintain them or pay property taxes, but are still allowed to participate in the program and the clustering of voucher units in certain blocks.

Suggestions

Suggestions for improving CMHA interaction with cities:

- Regular meetings between CMHA and local housing officials to discuss issues of concern.
- Communicate with each city's point person more frequently but also with mayors and city council members, if they want to get more voucher holders living in opportunity areas.
- More feedback on CMHA actions taken against problem landlords and tenants, if legally possible.
- Before authorizing the voucher, check with the city to see if the landlord is in compliance with city codes and licensing requirements.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CMHA's voucher holders have become more suburbanized since 2005, consistent with national trends. They are taking advantage of the increasing "affordability" of housing in the suburbs resulting from the housing crisis and recession. However, countywide, 30% of all voucher holders and 32% of voucher holder households with children live in "concentrated" census tracts where voucher holders make up 20% or more of all renters. Only 14% of voucher holders have chosen units in CMHA designated "opportunity areas."

The literature suggests that the most effective strategies for moving voucher holders to areas of greater opportunity are more complete and accurate information about neighborhood attributes and complete, up-to-date listings of available units that accept vouchers. Personalized search

assistance, post-move assistance, and assistance for tenants in understanding their rights with landlords, the ability to extend the search period if needed and assistance with security deposits are also important.

The surveys and focus groups provided clear and valuable information about the factors that are important to voucher holders in selecting a neighborhood. Survey respondents identified the five most important factors: 1) affordability, 2) safety, 3) proximity to grocery stores and shopping, 4) good schools, and 5) public transit. If CMHA wants to encourage more voucher holders to move to non-concentrated areas and especially to opportunity areas, the first and easiest change would be to provide voucher holders with information about these five factors in various neighborhoods across the County. For example, the information sessions could include an exercise that illustrates the types of questions to ask or sources to check to identify if these factors are present in a neighborhood.

Without significant additional resources, the orientation/information sessions for voucher holders and movers could be redesigned to be more relevant to the northeast Ohio housing market, both visually and in terms of the information provided. Specifically, voucher holders should be given up to date information about these five neighborhood attributes, all of which can be objectively measured and clearly communicated. Additionally, for relatively low cost, voucher holders could be given a search checklist with criteria for judging the adequacy of units to assist them in the search process.

CMHA should also check in with voucher holders mid-way through the search process to offer search assistance, if needed. For those who have not yet found a suitable unit, CMHA could consider adding a counseling session to address common questions or barriers, such as how rents are set, units that do not pass inspection or meet rent standards or difficulty finding landlords who accept vouchers. Other forms of assistance might include an opportunity for an individual to meet with or talk with a CMHA representative.

The focus group found that voucher holders are confused about the rent levels that can be paid under the program. Clearer guidance on this, perhaps in a one-on-one session following the orientation that also provides personalized search assistance would minimize confusion.

The need for improved communication was a common suggestion on the part of landlords, community officials, and voucher holders. This goes hand-in-hand with suggestions from all three groups to improve customer service, including more electronic options for submitting paperwork. Specific suggestions include improving the electronic interface and landlord portal by developing a system modeled after online real estate services, expediting paperwork processing with a user-friendly upload process, minimizing redundancy by arranging existing leases through an online system, and saving time for landlords via efficient email communication. Other suggestions include improving telephone access as a live receptionist is preferred over automated system or voicemail inbox that is often full. Other suggestions from the landlords relate to the inspection process. Consistency, professionalism, timeliness and customer service are important to landlords.

Marketing the program to prospective landlords was a suggestion that came out of the focus groups. Participants cited the need to present the program in a positive light and dispel misconceptions about tenants to get more landlords to participate.

The suggestion to have CMHA program representative meet regularly with city officials should be seriously considered as a way to build bridges, increase the lines of communication and address questions.

Finally, CMHA should create an advisory committee with representation from landlords, tenants and cities to provide feedback on the program and troubleshoot issues before they escalate. The committee could provide feedback on program operations and make suggestions for future program improvements.

The rental housing market is expected to tighten in coming years which will make it harder for voucher holders to find affordable units. This pilot study has identified a number of ways that CMHA can better assist voucher holders with their searches. Efforts to provide search information that speaks directly to the factors that voucher holders have identified as important such as search assistance, improved lists of available units, communications and customer service, marketing that presents the program in a positive light, and offering landlords, community officials and voucher holders more of a voice in program operations are recommended components of a long-term strategy to open up more housing options for voucher holders.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Housing Choice Voucher Holders by City of Residence, 2005-2015

Housing Choice Voucher Holders by City of Residence, 2005-2015						
	No. of Voucher Holders (as of 1/2005)	No. of Voucher Holders (as of 1/2010)	No. of Voucher Holders (as of 1/2015)	5 year % change (2005- 2010)	5 year % change (2010- 2015)	10 year % change (2005- 2015)
Inner Suburbs						
Bedford*	101	115	147	14%	28%	46%
Bedford Heights	43	291	416	577%	43%	867%
Berea*	17	27	18	59%	-33%	6%
Brook Park*	14	10	31	-29%	210%	121%
Brooklyn*	13	24	26	85%	8%	100%
Brooklyn Heights						
Cleveland Heights	776	834	722	7%	-13%	-7%
East Cleveland	945	683	576	-28%	-16%	-39%
Euclid	1216	1624	2087	34%	29%	72%
Fairview Park*	27	34	37	26%	9%	37%
Garfield Heights	321	486	637	51%	31%	98%
Lakewood	337	368	391	9%	6%	16%
Maple Heights	355	522	745	47%	43%	110%
Parma	106	152	120	43%	-21%	13%
Parma Heights*	20	82	86	310%	5%	330%
Shaker Heights	363	329	262	-9%	-20%	-28%
South Euclid	166	261	245	57%	-6%	48%
University Heights	91	90	66	-1%	-27%	-27%
Warrensville Heights*	138	297	251	115%	-15%	82%
Subtotal All Inner Suburbs	5049	6229	6863	23%	10%	36%
Subtotal Opportunity Inner Suburb	330	589	596	78%	1%	81%

*Also an Opportunity Area

continued next page

Appendix 1. Housing Choice Voucher Holders by City of Residence, 2005-2015, continued

Housing Choice Voucher Holders by City of Residence, 2005-2015 p.2						
Opportunity Areas (Suburbs)						
Bay Village	1	6	7	500%	17%	600%
Beachwood	4	3	4	-25%	33%	0%
Bratenahl		1	2		100%	
Brecksville	1	1	0	0%	-100%	-100%
Broadview Heights	4	2	2	-50%	0%	-50%
Chagrin Falls Village	2	2		0%	-100%	-100%
Glenwillow Village	1	1		0%	-100%	-100%
Highland Heights		4	2		-50%	
Highland Hills	22	19	12	-14%	-37%	-45%
Independence	1			-100%		-100%
Linndale	1	3		200%	-100%	-100%
Lyndhurst	13	13	8	0%	-38%	-38%
Mayfield Heights	15	28	25	87%	-11%	67%
Middleburg Heights	6	9	4	50%	-56%	-33%
Moreland Hills	1		1	-100%		0%
Newburgh Heights	10	20	15	100%	-25%	50%
None		5				
North Olmsted	17	27	26	59%	-4%	53%
North Randall	5	5	5	0%	0%	0%
North Royalton	7	8	5	14%	-38%	-29%
Oakwood Village	14	16	13	14%	-19%	-7%
Olmsted Falls	6	8	5	33%	-38%	-17%
Olmsted Township	1	3		200%	-100%	-100%
Orange Village	6	4	4	-33%	0%	-33%
Pepper Pike		1			-100%	
Richmond Heights	22	130	214	491%	65%	873%
Rocky River	26	32	48	23%	50%	85%
Seven Hills	1	4	1	300%	-75%	0%
Solon	6	11	6	83%	-45%	0%
Strongsville	124	84	38	-32%	-55%	-69%
Valley View	1			-100%		-100%
Westlake	19	14	11	-26%	-21%	-42%
Woodmere	2	1	2	-50%	100%	0%
Subtotal All Opportunity	669	1054	1056	58%	0%	58%
Subtotal All Suburbs	5388	6694	7323	24%	9%	36%
City of Cleveland	8017	7407	6556	-8%	-11%	-18%
Total	13,405	14,101	13,879	5%	-2%	4%
All of County (HCV)	13,405	14,101	13,879	5%	-2%	4%
	2005	2010	2015			
% HCV for All Suburbs	40.2%	47.5%	52.8%			
% HCV City of Cleveland	59.8%	52.5%	47.2%			
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%			

Appendix 2. HCVP Pilot Study Clusters, Characteristics

HCVP Pilot Study Clusters, Characteristics, 2010											
	Cleveland Heights		Lakewood		North Collinwood		Fairview	Kamms	Mayfield Heights	Rest of County	
HCVP Concentration?	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
HCVP as a % of Rental Market	6.7	30.3	2.1	3.9	9.5	25.3	1.9	2.5	0.6	5.4	28.3
Number of Tracts	15	5	16	3	5	1	5	9	5	346	36
Housing Characteristics											
Total housing units	17,879	4,314	21,068	6,857	9,388	639	8,103	12,740	10,001	484,960	45,235
HCVP units	483	293	203	168	394	48	38	97	26	8545	3635
Median Housing Value	\$ 145,100	\$ 114,800	\$ 131,400	\$ 112,700	\$ 78,600	\$ 73,900	\$ 148,200	\$ 109,700	\$ 135,300	\$ 110,400	\$ 85,000
Median Gross Rent	\$ 844	\$ 771	\$ 752	\$ 645	\$ 652	\$ 726	\$ 728	\$ 622	\$ 830	\$ 733	\$ 773
Occupied (%)	88.4	84.6	89.1	86.1	79.5	76.4	93.7	92.6	91.6	85.9	83.1
Vacant (%)	11.6	15.4	10.9	13.9	20.5	23.6	6.3	7.4	8.4	14.1	16.9
Owner occupied (%)	48.1	62.2	43.7	22.9	35.5	46.6	68.7	62.5	49.1	53.3	54.7
Renter occupied (%)	40.2	22.4	45.4	63.2	44.0	29.7	25.0	30.1	42.5	32.6	28.4
One-unit detached (%)	55.2	77.5	44.0	10.4	41.3	66.8	73.0	68.7	50.0	59.4	71.9
One-unit attached (%)	5.0	5.3	5.1	1.8	7.5	11.7	3.1	7.3	5.9	5.6	4.6
Two unit (%)	5.0	6.0	21.3	8.5	15.4	18.8	0.9	5.1	1.8	9.8	6.1
3-4 unit (%)	6.6	0.5	6.6	5.1	4.9	0.9	1.2	1.7	1.3	3.7	2.2
5-9 units (%)	8.0	1.2	3.5	6.1	4.3	1.1	3.7	3.6	5.0	4.1	3.9
10-19 units (%)	6.0	5.3	6.0	12.8	5.2	0.6	4.4	7.0	2.4	4.8	4.3
20+ units (%)	13.9	4.3	13.3	55.2	17.9	0.0	13.8	6.4	33.5	12.1	6.3
Population Characteristics											
Median age	40.4	34.4	33.0	33.0	39.2	40.5	40.1	40.3	37.0	40.5	41.5
Male (%)	46.2	46.5	48.5	48.0	46.2	38.9	46.9	48.7	45.4	47.7	45.0
Female (%)	53.8	53.5	51.5	52.0	53.8	61.1	53.1	51.3	54.6	52.3	55.0
< 18 years old (%)	22.0	26.2	20.2	14.9	22.8	19.7	21.6	20.2	20.5	22.7	24.6
Btw. 18 and 64 years old (%)	65.0	59.5	69.5	72.5	62.7	73.2	61.1	66.4	56.7	61.4	60.0
65+ years old (%)	13.1	14.2	10.3	12.6	14.5	7.1	17.3	13.4	22.9	15.9	15.4
White alone (%)	55.7	26.8	90.2	76.0	31.5	0.3	95.7	85.0	82.5	66.8	24.5
African American alone (%)	36.3	68.0	5.2	14.1	65.5	99.7	1.3	9.1	7.8	27.2	72.1
Hispanic (%)	1.9	4.2	3.5	6.4	0.6	0.0	3.9	8.6	4.2	5.2	1.6
Economic Characteristics											
Poverty rate	19.8	18.9	14.9	20.4	29.3	14.9	6.8	14.0	6.1	17.7	20.5
Unemployment rate	8.2	14.3	9.7	8.3	16.6	25.5	7.7	11.1	4.8	11.7	16.5
Median income	\$ 50,250	\$ 47,465	\$ 48,415	\$ 31,789	\$ 34,500	\$ 29,167	\$ 56,250	\$ 50,474	\$ 46,454	\$ 39,191	\$ 34,824



Housing Choice Voucher Applicant Survey

Conducted by Cleveland State University, Levin College of Urban Affairs

Current address, city, zip code: _____

Date: _____

1. How many children under 18 are living with you? ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 or more (check one)
2. Your race/ethnicity? (check one)

<input type="checkbox"/> Black (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American
<input type="checkbox"/> White	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
3. What is your age?
☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65+
4. What is your sex?
☐ Male ☐ Female
5. Are you currently employed? ☐ Yes ☐ No
a. If yes, are you employed full-time or part-time? ☐ Full-time ☐ Part-time
6. Do you have access to a car when you need it? ☐ Yes ☐ No
7. How many times have you moved in the last year? ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 or more
8. Are you happy with the neighborhood you live in now? ☐ Yes ☐ No
9. Will you use your voucher to move to a different neighborhood? ☐ Yes ☐ No
a. If yes, which neighborhood or city do you hope to move to? _____
10. What information sources do you plan to use to find a new unit? (check all that apply)
☐ Information from today's session ☐ Go Section 8.com ☐ Housing Cleveland.org ☐ Friends and family ☐ Newspaper rental listings ☐ Other _____



11. Which of these factors did you consider when you chose your CURRENT neighborhood? (Check ALL that apply, then circle your top 3)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable cost of living | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly, helpful neighbors | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to nature/outdoors/safe play spaces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic/racial composition | <input type="checkbox"/> Landlord | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to friends/family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Many new job opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> City services | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to child care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to my work | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to medical services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good public transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to where I lived before | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic diversity | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to grocery store and other shopping | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbors not prejudiced | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good schools | | |

12. Which of these factors are most important to you in choosing your NEXT neighborhood? (Check ALL that apply, then circle your top 3)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable cost of living | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly, helpful neighbors | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to nature/outdoors/safe play spaces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic/racial composition | <input type="checkbox"/> Landlord | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to friends/family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Many new job opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> City services | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to child care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to my work | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to medical services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good public transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to where I lived before | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic diversity | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to grocery store and other shopping | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbors not prejudiced | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good schools | | |

13. Was the information provided by CMHA at today's session useful? ☐ Yes ☐ No (check one)
Why or why not? _____

14. Do you have any suggestions for additional information that would help you find a better unit?

15. Do you think you have some good choices about where you will be able to live using your voucher? ☐ Yes ☐ No (check one)

For more information about our study, please contact Kathryn Hexter at Cleveland State University at 216-687-6941 or k.hexter@csuohio.edu



Appendix 4. Movers Survey

Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs

Housing Choice Voucher Holder Movers Survey Conducted by Cleveland State University, Levin College of Urban Affairs

Current Address: _____

Date: _____

1. Is this your first move using a Housing Choice Voucher? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - a. If no, how many times have you moved with your voucher? _____
2. Why are you moving? (check all that apply) ☐ dissatisfied with unit ☐ problem with landlord
☐ dissatisfied with location ☐ seeking better school for children ☐ landlord raised rent
☐ Other (please specify) _____
3. How many children under 18 live with you? ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 or more (check one)
4. What is your race/ethnicity? (check one)

<input type="checkbox"/> Black (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American
<input type="checkbox"/> White	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____
5. Are you currently employed? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - a. If yes, are you employed full-time or part-time? ☐ Full-time ☐ Part-time
6. Do you have access to a car when you need it? ☐ Yes ☐ No
7. Overall, are you happy with the neighborhood you live in now? ☐ Yes ☐ No
8. Do you plan to use your voucher to move to a different neighborhood? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - a. If yes, which neighborhood or city do you hope to move to? _____
9. What information sources do you plan to use to find a new unit? (check all that apply)
☐ Information from today's session ☐ Go Section 8.com ☐ Housing Cleveland.org ☐ Friends and family
☐ Newspaper rental listings ☐ Other _____
10. Which of these factors did you consider when you chose your CURRENT neighborhood? (Check ALL that apply, then circle the 3 that were most important)

<input type="checkbox"/> Affordable cost of living	<input type="checkbox"/> Friendly, helpful neighbors	<input type="checkbox"/> nature/outdoors/safe play spaces
<input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic/racial composition	<input type="checkbox"/> Landlord	<input type="checkbox"/> Close to friends/family
<input type="checkbox"/> Many new job opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> City services	<input type="checkbox"/> Close to child care
<input type="checkbox"/> Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Close to my work	<input type="checkbox"/> Close to medical services
<input type="checkbox"/> Good public transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Close to where I lived before	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Economic diversity	<input type="checkbox"/> Close to grocery store and other shopping	
<input type="checkbox"/> Neighbors not prejudiced	<input type="checkbox"/> Close to	
<input type="checkbox"/> Good schools		



11. Which of these factors are most important to you in choosing your NEXT neighborhood? (Check ALL that apply, then circle the 3 that were most important)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable cost of living | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly, helpful neighbors | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to nature/outdoors/safe play spaces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic/racial composition | <input type="checkbox"/> Landlord | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to friends/family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Many new job opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> City services | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to child care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to my work | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to medical services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good public transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to where I live now | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic diversity | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to grocery store and other shopping | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbors not prejudiced | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good schools | | |

12. Was the information provided by CMHA at today's session useful? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Why or why not? _____

13. Do you have any suggestions for additional information that would help you find a better unit?

14. Do you think you have some good choices about where you will be able to live using your voucher? ☐ Yes ☐ No

For more information about our study, please contact Kathryn Hexter at Cleveland State University at 216-687-6941 or k.hexter@csuohio.edu

Appendix 5. Interview Questions for Landlords

Questions for landlords with HCV tenants.

1. How long have you been involved with the Housing Choice Voucher program?
2. How did you first learn about the program?
3. Profile of your rental properties (you can also e-mail them this and ask them to fill it out):
 - a. Total number of properties/units in your portfolio?
 - b. In which cities/neighborhoods?
 - c. How many Housing Choice Voucher tenants do you have? In which cities/neighborhoods?
 - d. How many other units in your portfolio house have some other type of subsidy? (please name subsidy programs and then ask them to compare with CMHA experience)
4. Has the number of your tenants with housing choice vouchers increased or decreased in the past 5 years? Do you have any insights into why this is the case?
5. How do you attract voucher holders?
6. What is your experience, positive and negative, with Housing Choice Voucher holders living in your properties?
7. What is your experience, positive and negative, with CMHA? What about the annual inspections? (probes: timely payments, consistent and timely information)
8. What is your experience, positive and negative, with community/public officials? Others (commercial property or landlord insurance companies, police, neighbors, etc.)
9. Did the CMHA orientation provide you with enough/adequate information to understand how the program works?
10. Are you likely to continue to participate in the program?
11. Are you interested in sharing your story with other landlords?
12. What suggestions do you have to address the issues you have experienced?

Questions for landlords with NO HCV tenants. (Recruited from newspaper ads that specify “No Section 8”.)

1. Profile of your rental properties (you can also e-mail them this and ask them to fill it out):
 - a. Total number of properties/units in your portfolio?
 - b. In which cities/neighborhoods?
 - c. How many Housing Choice Voucher tenants do you have now? In which cities/neighborhoods?
 - d. How many other units in your portfolio house have some other type of subsidy? (please name subsidy programs and then ask them to compare with CMHA experience)
2. Have you ever rented to any Housing Choice Voucher tenants?
3. Why or why not? (Probes: experience with tenants, experience with CMHA)
4. Would you consider renting to voucher holders in the future? Why or why not?
5. What are your perceptions of the HCV program?

Appendix 6. City of Residence, Survey Respondents

New Voucher Session Respondents		
City	Number	Percent
Cleveland	79	68%
Beachwood	1	1%
Bedford	2	2%
Bedford Hts.	1	1%
Brooklyn	1	1%
E. Cleveland	6	5%
Euclid	3	3%
Garfield	4	3%
Lakewood	2	2%
Macedonia	1	1%
Maple Hts.	7	6%
Oakwood	2	2%
Shaker Hts	5	4%
Westlake	1	1%
Woodmere	1	1%
Total	116	100%

continued next page

Mover Sessions Respondents		
City	Number	Percent
Cleveland	44	54%
Bedford	4	5%
Cleveland Hts.	6	7%
East Cleveland	5	6%
Euclid	9	11%
Garfield	1	1%
Maple Heights	4	5%
Olmsted Falls	1	1%
Parma	2	2%
Shaker Hts.	4	5%
South Euclid	1	1%
University Hts.	1	1%
Total	82	100%

Appendix 7. Community Officials Interview Questions

CMHA Voucher Holder Pilot Study

Questions for public/community officials.—Fairview Park, Mayfield Hts., Cleveland Hts.

1. How would you characterize the operation of the Housing Choice Voucher program in your community?
2. How has your perception of the program changed over the past 5 years?
3. What is your experience, positive and negative, with Housing Choice Voucher holders living in your community?
4. What is your experience, positive and negative, with CMHA? Is the MOU a useful document?
5. What is your experience, positive and negative, with landlords who accept Housing Choice Voucher holders as tenants?
6. If your experience has been positive, are you interested in sharing your story with other communities?
7. If your experience has been negative, what suggestions do you have to address the issues you have experienced?